



## KEY TALKING POINTS FOR CITIZEN CORPS

- Citizen Corps is a nationwide grass roots movement to actively involve all Americans in making our communities and our nation safer, stronger, and better prepared for all hazards and threats.
- We all have a role in hometown security. Everyone in America has the ability – and the responsibility – to ***Prepare, Train, and Volunteer!*** Our goal is to change the culture to ensure that everyone takes an active role in their safety and to increase the collaboration between citizens and emergency responders.
  - We must all embrace the personal responsibility of being prepared. We must all prepare emergency supply kits at home, at work, and for the car. We must all have family communications plans and practice home evacuations. We must all participate in crime prevention and mitigation practices.
  - We must all get training in emergency prevention, preparedness, and response and maintain our skills to help others in a critical situation. This includes first aid, CPR, fire safety, and emergency response skills. In 95 percent of all emergencies, it is either the victim or a bystander who provides the first, immediate assistance at the scene.
  - And we can all support our local emergency responders year-round and during an incident. Based on data from *EMS Magazine* and the Department of Homeland Security, there is only one firefighter for every 280 people, one law enforcement officer for every 385 people, and only one EMT/paramedic for every 325 people. In a large scale event, emergency responders will be overwhelmed. Citizens must be prepared to care for themselves and others.
- At the state, tribal, and local level, Citizen Corps activities are coordinated by the Citizen Corps Council. These Councils bring together the homeland security expertise of emergency responders with the energy and spirit of volunteers, the private sector, and other community stakeholders.
- Together, the Council members develop a Citizen Corps strategy that fosters a connection between citizens and local emergency responders and involves everyone in making their family and their community safer. This strategy includes public education and outreach, training, and volunteer programs and activities, including the 5 principal Citizen Corps Programs and the resources provided by the network of Citizen Corps Affiliates.
- Citizen Corps activities address all-hazards and are tailored to the unique attributes of the community; taking into account the community's potential threats, needs, geography, population density, and population composition.
- Benefits for the public:
  - a greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control;
  - builds community pride, unity, patriotism and a citizen voice in hometown security;
  - promotes risk reduction, mitigation, prevention and preparedness practices;
  - prepares us all for helping ourselves and others in a crisis
- Benefits for emergency responders:
  - provides meaningful and sustained interface with citizens in a collaborative setting
  - provides year-round volunteer support
  - reduces impact of disasters through advocating preparedness and mitigation
  - develops informed, trained citizens to provide disaster response surge capacity